

WSDOT I-5 Spokane Street to I-90 Bridge Repair Project

Frequently Asked Questions

Rev. August 10, 2007

1) Where will traffic go?

Alternate routes include:

- Airport Way S.
- Fourth Avenue S.
- First Avenue S.
- Alaskan Way S.
- SR 99/SR 599
- I-405
- East Marginal Way

2) How will drivers know where to go?

New striping, traffic signal timing changes and traffic control officers will guide motorists. WSDOT is providing signed detours when freeway ramps are closed, as well as signs alerting drivers to lane closures in advance of the actual construction location. However, there are no set detours- rather drivers should choose an alternate route that works best for them.

A better option to driving is riding the bus, because there will be a dedicated transit, vanpool and truck lane on Airport Way S.

Traffic signal changes

Signals on the following streets will be synchronized to best handle the additional traffic, enhance emergency response and the City's Traffic Management Center will be staffed and remain open on weekends to enhance responsiveness.

- Lucile – Left turn modified to provide longer lead and lag times between signal changes
- Airport Way/ 13th Street S- Adding traffic signal
- Airport Way - 10 signals adjusted to help emergency response
- First Avenue S. – 12 signals retimed to help traffic flow
- Fourth Avenue S.- 14 signals retimed to help traffic flow
- SR 99 / E. Marginal Way - 18 signals retimed from Boeing Admin Bldg to Spokane S. Street
- Fourth Avenue S. and S. Spokane Street – Install eastbound left turn
- Beacon Avenue- Evaluating options for signal timing
- Rainier Avenue S. – 20 to 35 signals adjusted to support emergency response north of MLK

3) Will streets being used as alternate routes be safe for pedestrians and bicyclists?

During the construction, bike and pedestrian routes will remain open, although streets will be more crowded. Heavy emphasis will be placed on 'Sharing the Road' during this time. Drivers will be asked to **be aware, generous and patient**. Bicyclists should **wear helmets and ride predictably and visibly**.

4) Will speed limits change?

Speed limits on city streets will not be changed, because we do not anticipate it will be a problem due to the high volume of cars. However, speed limits will be reduced on I-5 to avoid conflicts with motorists and WSDOT crews.

5) I'm not stopping in Seattle. Can I stay on I-5?

Yes. Two to three lanes will remain open for thru traffic, but lane widths will be reduced from 12 to 10 feet. Drivers should be prepared for delays and drive with caution through the construction zone.

6) Can you install temporary speed bumps on city streets?

No. Due to the high volume of cars, speeds will likely be slow. However, SPD is adding officers to help manage traffic and SDOT is using striping and synchronizing our signals to manage traffic and speeds.

7) Where will police be stationed—will you have flaggers?

WSP

Washington State Patrol will monitor I-5 and on- and off-ramps, provide emphasis patrols for unsafe or aggressive driving, and will assist with lane changes and incident management.

SPD

The Seattle Police Department will initially focus on S. Spokane St. and First Ave. S. to make sure traffic keeps moving out of both West Seattle and from south of S. Spokane St. Additional officers will be available for the Georgetown, Beacon Hill and SODO neighborhoods if issues arise. This is a flexible plan is created to respond to real time needs.

SDOT

SDOT is stationing Incident Response vehicles fitted with large, custom designed, plastic coated bumpers in key areas. These SDOT Roadside Assistance trucks will quickly assist stalled vehicles starting Saturday, August 11.

8) Where will signs be installed and what will they say?

Restrictive lane use signs will be posted along Airport Way between Boeing Access Rd. and Spokane St., restricting one lane to trucks and transit only.

WSDOT's electronic freeway message signs will alert motorists of the closures, both before and during construction. Signs will also warn drivers of freeway on-ramp closures direct them to detour routes.

9) Where and why is on-street parking being restricted?

No additional parking restrictions will be necessary.

10) Won't the additional traffic on Argo Bridge be dangerous?

No. SDOT evaluated the situation and determined existing lane restrictions, based on weight, are sufficient for managing increased traffic volume for the short duration of the project.

11) Won't the congestion slow emergency police/fire trucks/ambulances down?

Alternate routes will be identified in advance and emergency vehicles will function as they do today on congested roads.

12) What can I do to help decrease congestion?

Avoid northbound I-5 when possible. Carpool, vanpool, take the bus or train, walk, bicycle, work from home, use Flexcar, or work hours other than nine to five. Delay, reschedule or combine discretionary trips.

13) Will extra buses be running?

No. Metro has enough vacant seats on current buses to accommodate more riders. However, extra locations for Park and Ride lots near Sounder and bus stops have been leased and an additional water taxi and Sounder train will run in the AM and PM.

14) How are people being notified of construction?

WSDOT is:

- giving presentations to community, business, and travel and tourism groups,
- working with the media,
- coordinating with local governments, transit agencies, and emergency service providers
- developing posters and handouts,
- promoting options to driving alone,
- using the Internet,
- sending e-mail alerts, and
- notifying businesses and trucking companies in advance.

15) Why is the work being done now?

Several reasons:

- Driver safety must be maintained
- Upcoming transportation projects will place extra traffic on I-5, must prepare
- Seafair activities are over
- School is not in session
- Weather is good
- Many people are on vacation
- Better option to spreading work over 60 weekends

16) Who do I call if there is a problem?

For noise complaints, call 24-hour WSDOT noise hotline at 206-768-9052. For general construction inquiries and concerns call the WSDOT construction project office during business hours at 206-764-4105. Enforcement and emergency calls should be directed to 911.

17) Are large trucks and deliveries being accommodated?

Yes. The northbound right lane on Airport Way from S. Spokane Street to S. Royal Brougham Way will be designated for large trucks and transit. Businesses are encouraged to limit deliveries to mid mornings and afternoons to avoid rush hour.

SDOT is keeping the Southwest Spokane Street Swing Bridge (low bridge) over the Duwamish River in place for weekday morning peak period (6-9AM) traffic to help move traffic.